

POLITICAL PRISONERS IN IRAN ARE SUBJECTED TO PHARMACOLOGICAL TORTURE



Campaign to Free Political Prisoners in Iran
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At Freedom from Torture, we have witnessed and documented the consequences of pharmacological torture of detainees as described in this report, from countries such as Iran. Pharmacological torture is extremely distressing and punitive as it causes severe physical pain, harmful and painful physiological changes, confusion, perceptual abnormalities, fearfulness and anxiety, lethargy, and loss of personal agency.

I am personally aware of the inhumane effects of pharmacological torture from my work rehabilitating survivors at Freedom from Torture. Such accounts of torture have included incidents of political detainees being wrongly admitted to psychiatric units, invalidated by trumped-up psychiatric diagnoses, and forcibly injected with drugs which caused severe pain throughout their body, fever, confusion, and extreme fearfulness.

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TRIGGER & CONTENT WARNING

This report contains descriptions of violence, abuse, torture, and death. The reported information will be emotionally and intellectually challenging for the reader. Readers are advised to consider the potential impact on their well-being.

TIGGER TAGS

Violence, Abuse, Torture, Addiction, Suicide, Death

Report Overview

This report exposes the inhuman practice of pharmacological torture inflicted upon political prisoners held in the prisons of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Based on extensive investigations conducted by Campaign to Free Political prisoners in Iran (CFPPI), the use of pharmacological torture has alarmingly increased in 2022-2023. This surge follows the death of Mahsa (Jina) Amini, who lost her life due to torture in a detention centre in Tehran.

This report's findings draw on testimonies of individuals arrested during the protests of 2022-2023. These are the first-hand accounts of witnesses who spoke about their experiences for the first time and entrusted them to CFPPI. Additionally, the report incorporates accounts from former political prisoners who have shared their experiences and bear witness to the grim realities within the Islamic Republic of Iran's prison system. These testimonies emphasise the reality that the use of pharmacological torture is not an isolated occurrence but a prevalent and pervasive method of torture.

The undeniable conclusion of this report is that there has been an alarming increase in the use of pharmacological torture in the Islamic Republic of Iran's prison system. CFPPI calls on the international community to take immediate and decisive action to investigate these types of torture and the subsequent deaths. The Islamic regime in Iran must be held accountable for its crimes against political prisoners.

This report also highlights another vitally important risk to prisoners from the 2022-2023 protests, which pertains to the number of detainees who lost their lives after their release from prison. These deaths were labelled as suicides or sudden deaths by the authorities. Although notable cases are briefly mentioned, they were not investigated for this report and necessitate formal investigation.

Introduction

The Islamic regime in Iran has been intentionally and systematically subjecting more political prisoners to pharmacological torture by sending prisoners to psychiatric centres and administering anti-psychotic drugs as a form of torture. Whereas formerly, prison guards would offer sedatives to prisoners, which many of the younger and newer prisoners voluntarily accepted to ease their experience, new reports suggest that since September 2022 the practice has changed to violent and coercive administering of unwanted drugs. Recently released prisoners have reported to the Campaign to Free Political prisoners in Iran (CFPPI) that it has now become standard practice for prison guards to forcibly administer drugs to the prisoners as part of psychological and physical torture to extract a confession. It is reported that drugs have been added to the prisoners' food and drinking water. Many prisoners have reportedly developed addictions in prison, which continue even after their release.

This report aims to demonstrate the increase in the use of pharmacological torture in prisons across the Islamic Republic of Iran and to call for the international community to take concrete steps to investigate this type of torture, the subsequent deaths, and to hold the Islamic regime in Iran accountable.

The findings of this report are from three sources, the accounts of detainees from the protests of 2022-2023 who are inside Iran and have spoken about their experiences for the first time and shared their accounts with CFPPI (documented in table 1), the accounts of former political prisoners who have shared their experiences and what they witnessed in prisons with CFPPI (documented in table 2), and the previously published accounts of former and current political prisoners who have experienced pharmacological torture (documented in table 3). To protect the identify and the safety of the correspondents their names and other identifiable details have been omitted.

The Islamic regime in Iran has a decades-long track record of using psychotropic drugs and pharmacological torture in Prisons.

For the past four decades, Iran's Islamic regime relied on psychotropic drugs and sedatives as a tool to regulate and control the conditions within the prison facilities. The use of these drugs was typically at prisoners' requests, often driven by the unbearable conditions prevailing within the detention facilities. Pharmacological torture primarily targeted well-known political prisoners, as documented in table 3, which in some cases resulted in the prisoner's death. The regime often labelled these death as 'suicide,' 'overdose,' or 'illnesses'. Amnesty International reported the

deaths in custody of several political prisoners in 2018¹. According to a 2017 report by Freedom from Torture, 10% of their patients experienced pharmacological torture in prisons in Iran². To this point, in a UN Secretary-General report entitled “Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran” (2018, p. 5), it is stated that “the Secretary-General remains concerned about continuing reports indicating that the practice of torture and ill-treatment in the Islamic Republic of Iran persists [...] Incidents documented and reported by civil society organizations include blunt force trauma, positional torture, burns, sharp force, electric shocks, use of water, crushing, pharmacological torture, asphyxiation, and amputation, as well as sleep deprivation, threats, humiliation, and prolonged solitary confinement.”³

In a deeply troubling development, reports point to a marked increase in the employment of pharmacological torture over the last five years. This rise is indicative of a concerning trend within the Iranian prison system. Moreover, since September 2022, following the death in custody of Mahsa (Jina) Amini, there has been a notable further increase in the forced administration of pharmacological drugs within Iranian prisons, particularly as a means to coerce confessions from detainees. Such instances call for urgent international attention and intervention to address the deteriorating human rights conditions in Iran.

Pharmacological torture is used to extract information or subdue prisoners into compliance.

Pharmacological torture is the use of psychoactive, psychotropic drugs or other types of drugs to punish, extract information, or to subdue prisoners into compliance by causing distress in the form of pain, anxiety, panic, psychological disturbances, immobilization, hallucination, paranoia, disorientation, and addiction. Of all forms of torture, pharmacological torture is the most egregious as there may be little or no violence involved, leading no obvious visible physical signs which would cause suspicion of torture. Further allaying suspicion of torture is the deliberate absence of documentation and record-keeping of torture, or the types of drugs used. Frequently, prisoners remain unaware of receiving drugs and medications, as this is typically accomplished by covertly contaminating their food and drink over an extended period. The prisoners will then experience a range of symptoms, including loss of consciousness, loss of memory, delirium, speech impediments, hallucinations, numbness, lethargy, anxiety, and panic. In severe cases, death may also occur.

¹ Joint public statement by [Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Justice for Iran, and Center for Human Rights in Iran](#)

² Report by [Freedom From Torture](#), p. 11.

³ [United Nations Security Council Report: Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report of the Secretary-General](#)

In the prisons of the Islamic regime, pharmacological torture is administered through various methods, including ingestible fluids, pills, and injections.

Political prisoners have consistently reported instances of pharmacological torture, which involve the administration of addictive substances in various forms and methods. Vida Rabbani ⁴, a jailed journalist, wrote in a letter from prison and spoke about her own and other prisoners' experiences of pharmacological torture (Appendix B). CFPPI has collected reports about multiple prisons across Iran including in Tehran, Baluchistan, Kurdistan, Khuzestan, Qom and Khorasan where detainees have recounted incidents where prison guards mixed some medication or drug into their drinks, resulting in delusional states and, in some cases, unconsciousness. Notably, many of those interviewed by CFPPI were unable to identify the specific names of the administered medications. However, a few individuals did mention some by name, including Diazepam, Alprazolam (Xanax), Haloperidol⁵, Chlordiazepoxide, Clonazepam, Tranqopin (also known as Quetiapine), and Lithium.

Suspicious deaths after release from prison

In recent cases involving detainees from the 2022-2023 protests in Iran, there have been instances where individuals lost their lives shortly after their release from prison. These victims were buried under the heavy presence of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) forces. None of these cases have undergone official investigations by the regime's authorities and families were not allowed to independently investigate the deaths of their loved ones. Instead, government agents have consistently attributed the causes of death to "suicide," "sudden death," or "overdose." It is important to note that the families of the victims have vehemently refuted these official claims, as evidenced in Table 4. It is reasonable to suspect that some of the released detainees, who subsequently lost their lives, may have been subjected to pharmacological torture, significantly impeding their psychological recovery.

⁴ <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/vida-rabbani-sentenced-seven-years-and-three-months-prison>

⁵ [Amnesty International](#): Scientific torture, p. 17, 18

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CFPPI urges the international human rights community to investigate and take decisive action against the widespread use of pharmacological torture within the prisons of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- CFPPI urges International human rights organisations, including the World Organisation Against Torture, UNICEF, UN Human Rights Council and its Fact-Finding Mission on Iran to investigate the use of pharmacological and psychological tortures and hold the Islamic regime accountable for these crimes against humanity.
- CFPPI urges the [UN Fact-Finding Mission](#) to investigate the suspicious deaths of several recently released detained protesters.
- CFPPI urges the governments, the European Union, and the European Parliament to support the investigation on pharmacological torture, to pressure the Islamic regime to stop arresting and torturing protesters, and to release political prisoners immediately and unconditionally.

Table 1. Accounts of pharmacological torture from six detainees arrested during the protests in 2022-2023

N	Arrest & Personal Details		Account
1	Province	Sistan & Baluchestan	She was arrested and detained in Zahedan prison for 55 days.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2023, June	<p><i>They [the prison guards] administered drugs to me twice a day, at noon and before bedtime. The pills were orange, and they would provide them to anyone claiming to be anxious or stressed. When they withheld the pills, my mind became highly disturbed, and I experienced persistent thoughts. The pills were not in any packaging, so I was unsure if they were consistently giving us the same medication.</i></p>
	Sex	F	
	Age	24	
2	Province	Tehran	He was detained in a prison in Tehran.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2023, Winter	<p><i>I am diabetic and have to inject insulin every day. During my arrest, I was initially denied access to my medication for the first few days, leading to struggles, including breathing problems. Subsequently, prison authorities permitted my family to bring insulin to the prison. Due to significant weight loss since my arrest, approximately 13 kilograms, I requested a reduction in the insulin dosage, recognizing the need for a lower amount. However, the guard refused, citing orders from the interrogator. After a few days, I fainted, prompting them to take me to the prison's doctor, who then agreed to decrease the insulin dosage. The prisoners suffered from a shortage of adequate food.</i></p>
	Sex	M	
	Age	33	
			<p><i>Since my release, I have experienced shaky hands, and there was one instance of a seizure."</i></p>

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3	Province	West Azerbaijan	She was tortured and raped several times. She was forced into taking unidentified pills, which had a profound impact on her, leading to a psychotic episode. Upon her release in July 2023, she made a suicide attempt and was subsequently admitted to the hospital. Fortunately, she survived the attempt but lost one of her kidneys.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2022, November	
	Sex	F	
	Age	27	
4	Province	Sistan & Baluchestan	He was arrested and detained in Zahedan Central Prison for one month and a half. <i>They [prison guards] administered pills to us once during the day and once at night. Initially, they provided the pills only for a few nights, but later they stopped giving them at night and started administering them every day. We were forced to take the pills, and we did not know what the pills were. The pills were beige in color. After taking the pills, I experienced delusions, but when I refrained from taking them, I felt normal. Before my arrest, I did not take any medication, and I did not have any pre-existing mental health issues.</i>
	Year & Month of Arrest	2022, September	
	Sex	M	
	Age	18	
5	Province	Tehran	She was held in a secret detention facility known as Khaneh Amn ⁶ . <i>I was administered drugs twice daily, in the morning and the afternoon. Initially, they threatened me, stating that if I refused to take the drugs, I would be punished. Subsequently, I stopped resisting. The nature of the drug was not disclosed to me, and it came in tablet form with no discernible color or smell. Following the ingestion of the drugs, I experienced severe pain and felt an intense heat at the back of my neck, akin to a hot rod piercing my brain. In the absence of the drug, I felt unwell, experiencing nausea, diarrhea, and symptoms resembling influenza. This medication was given to me for four days.</i> <i>Upon release, I did not undergo any medical check-ups. I am currently facing issues with my eyesight.</i> <i>Before my arrest, the only health concern I had was exam-related anxiety during university entrance exam.</i>
	Year & Month of Arrest	2022, October	
	Sex	F	
	Age	22	

⁶ [Extracts from a CNN report](#): Khaneh Amn, which translates as “safe house,” are secret torture houses that IRGC uses to hold and torture protesters.

6	Province	Kurdistan	He was detained in a detention center in a city in Kurdistan.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2022, October	<i>They administered drugs to me in the form of tablets and injections. I cannot recall if they had any color or smell. The frequency varied, ranging from once a day to several times per day. The administration was by force, and I endured severe torture. The identity of the drug was not disclosed to me. I cannot pinpoint a specific impact of the drug as the constant torture overshadowed any effects.</i>
	Sex	M	
	Age	28	
			<i>Following my release, I did not undergo any medical check-ups. I am currently experiencing severe headaches and difficulty with my balance.</i>
			<i>Prior to my arrest, I did not have mental health problems or illnesses and had never taken any medication [for mental health].</i>

Table 2. Examples of pharmacological torture in Islamic Republic of Iran’s prisons prior to the protests in 2022-2023

N	Arrest & Personal Details		Account
1	Province	Tehran	She was held in a prison in the province of Tehran for over 10 days.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2021, Winter	<i>They gave me pills twice a day, in the morning and at night. Initially I took the pills willingly due to severe stomach pain, but on certain days, I refused. The female prison guard was pressuring me and insisted that I must take them, threatening to report me to the interrogator, who might then react angrily and deprive me of my medication.</i>
	Sex	F	<i>All three drugs were in tablet form. I recognized one of the pills, but the other two were unfamiliar. They told me the doctor had prescribed them. Each day, a female prison guard delivered them to the cell along with water, carefully ensuring that I swallowed them. She even checked my hands, inside the glass, and under my tongue to confirm ingestion.</i>
	Age	35	<i>After taking the pills, my pain would subside, but they induced prolonged sleep.</i>
			<i>Initially, without the pills, I couldn’t sleep day and night during more than 10 days of solitary confinement.</i>
			<i>Before my arrest, I had some stomach problems, but they were not as severe as what I experienced in prison, where I even vomited blood.</i>
			<i>Upon entering the ward, the prison guards assured me that my medicines would be provided there, and I was instructed to take three pills daily. However, upon reaching the ward, the guards claimed they didn’t have the medicine I needed in their medicine stock and cabinets. Despite repeatedly asking for four days, the subsequent shifts of guards did not provide my medicine. I was repeatedly told that it was lost or not delivered. They only offered acetaminophen as an alternative.</i>
			<i>By the time of my release, I had lost 8 kg and was suffering from stomach inflammation and bacterial gastroenteritis.</i>

2	Province	Qom	He was held in the IRGC Detention Centre in solitary confinement in one of the cities of Qom province.
	Year & Month of Arrest	2020, July	
	Sex	M	<i>I was given pills twice a day, morning and night, for 30 days. For a week, three different pills were forcefully fed to me while I was blindfolded and handcuffed. They also injected me twice during torture and interrogation, causing me to pass out. Each time they gave me pills, I was told to open my mouth for inspection to ensure I had swallowed them. Refusing to take the pills resulted in them hitting my shins with batons.</i>
	Age	37	<i>The pills and injections were never identified to me. Once, when attempting to look from under my blindfold, I saw the pills were diamond shaped and kind of purple. After taking them, I fled stressed, confused, mentally disturbed, unable to concentrate, and experienced hallucinations and delirium. I felt as though the interrogator was constantly inside my mind, and I found myself talking with both the interrogator and the torturers. I was talking to myself and experiencing hallucinations, immersed in a delirious state. I felt empty, with a profound sense of uselessness. I felt suicidal.</i>
			<i>When prisoners enter the prison, they're initially taken to the prison's health centre to compile a medical history, compiling everything from the moment of their entry into the prison. During this process, I informed the prison doctor that as a political prisoner I was subjected to interrogation, mental and physical torture in solitary confinement, and forced to take certain drugs, resulting in a state resembling psychosis and addiction. The doctor calmly asserted that it was merely the effects of the drugs administered to extract confession, confirming it as a method employed by the interrogators.</i>
			<i>Following my release, I was unable to undergo a medical checkup due to financial constraints.</i>
			<i>Before my arrest, I did not have any mental or physical illnesses and did not use any medication.</i>

Table 3. Examples of cases previously published online and verified by CFPPI

N	Arrest & Personal Details		Account
1	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Saman Yasin, a 25-year-old Iranian rapper, currently incarcerated since his arrest during the 2022-2023 protests, was transferred to Aminabad (Razi) Psychiatric Hospital ⁷ on 23, July 2023. In his message to the public, provided in Appendix A, Saman speaks about the pharmacological torture he endured in Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital.
	Date of arrest	2, October, 2022	
	Name	Saman Yasin	
	Sex	M	
	Age	25	
2	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Soheil Arabi was arrested several times and spent nearly eight years in various prisons before being exiled to Borazjan in Bushehr province. In 2018, while held in the Greater Tehran Central Penitentiary (also known as Tehran Central Prison) in the southern part of Tehran, Soheil was subjected to pharmacological torture when Hedayatollah Farzadi served as the head of the prison during Arabi's ordeal. Arabi revealed: <i>During a period when numerous political prisoners were protesting within the prison, authorities resorted to forcibly administering psychotropic and sedative drugs, followed by their transfer to Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital. I spoke out against the prison conditions and the treatment of fellow inmates. The head of the prison, Hedayatollah Farzadi, warned me that if I continued expressing dissatisfaction, my next destination would be Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital. Unfazed by the threat, I persisted in my protests, which led to the authorities taking me to the prison's forensic doctor. Following a series of questions and answers, the doctor concluded that there was nothing medically wrong with me, questioning why the prison authorities labelled me as psychotic. I explained that I had been protesting the prison conditions. Despite the directive to send me to Aminabad, the doctor refused, stating that complying would compromise his integrity. However, he warned that the authorities wouldn't leave me alone, and some unscrupulous doctors might be willing to write such a letter for money.</i>
	Date of arrest	2, January, 2023	
	Name	Soheil Arabi	
	Sex	M	
	Age	38	

⁷ Razi Psychiatric Hospital, known as Aminabad in southern Tehran's Shahr-e-Rey district.

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A few days later, I was brought to the prison clinic to consult with another doctor. However, this doctor became agitated during our interaction and, after a series of questions, extensively insulted me. He prescribed medication, asserting that, according to the prison regulations, I was obligated to take the pills every night under the supervision of the clinic's nurse. I refused to comply. As a consequence, guards brought in several non-political prisoners who restrained me while using a funnel to forcibly administer the tablets down my throat.

The aftermath was severe. I experienced intense sickness, hallucinations, and persistent nightmares. For a prolonged period, people appeared to me in the form of animals – a human torso and lower body but with faces resembling wolves and hyenas. The ordeal left a lasting impact on my mental and physical wellbeing.¹⁰⁸

3	Province, City	Khorasan, Razavi	Hashem Khastar, is a prominent teachers' rights activist and a former political prisoner. He was reportedly abducted by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) security forces and subsequently taken directly to Ibn Sina Psychiatric Hospital in the city of Mashhad. ⁹
	Date of arrest	23, October, 2018	
	Name	Hashem Khastar	
	Sex	M	
	Age	70	
4	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Kianoosh Sanjar, a human rights activist arrested in 2016, recounted his harrowing experience of being transferred to psychiatric centers, including Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital, seven times. Throughout his ordeal, he endured electric shocks on nine occasions and was injected with drugs that not only affected his speech but also occasionally rendered him unconscious. ¹⁰¹¹¹²
	Date of arrest	2016	
	Name	Kianoosh Sanjari	
	Sex	M	
	Age	41	

⁸ https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02mrxMDarLF45c6FbZUGJftoecYjkVYV53NCMu4wmA3Ugm7tWHFGq72vK6SuddTdNpl&id=100065820091869

⁹ <https://irannewswire.org/iran-activist-abducted-by-mois-in-mashhad/>

¹⁰ <https://iranwire.com/en/prisoners/102499-kianoosh-sanjari-leaves-iran-1/>

¹¹ <https://iranwire.com/en/features/67428/>

¹² https://twitter.com/Sanjaribaf/status/1424681688278446080?t=b7iOj_UI8t2MjoKU8tWxQ&s=19

Table 4. Suspicious deaths after release from prison

N	Personal Details & Date of Death		Account
1	Province, City	Kurdistan, Sanandaj	<p>Mohammad Naderi was arrested during the 2022 protests and was released on 4th, November 2023. He informed his family that he was given numerous pills in prison. Tragically, he passed away one day after his release. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Cops (IRGC) did not permit the family to take his body for forensic examination and insisted that the family must declare Mohammad’s cause of death as heart failure.</p>
	Date of death	05, November, 2023	
	Name	Mohammad Naderi	
	Sex	M	
	Age	23	
2	Province, City	Mazandaran, Amol	<p>Javad Rouhi, who was detained in Noshahr, was arrested on 21, September 2022. He was transported to a local hospital in Noshahr, where he was pronounced dead on 31, August 2023. Officials asserted that Rouhi’s death was a result of an infection contracted during hospital treatment following a seizure in prison. However, the family vehemently denies this claim.</p>
	Date of death	31, August, 2023	
	Name	Javad Rouhi	
	Sex	M	
	Age	32	
3	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	<p>Amirhossein Torval, arrested on 24, October 2022, was temporarily released from Evin prison on bail. However, he tragically died under suspicious circumstances only ten days after his release.</p>
	Date of death	16, May, 2023	
	Name	Amirhosein Torval	
	Sex	M	
	Age	20	

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4	Province, City	Ilam, Dehloran	Bamshad Suleimankhani, arrested in November 2022, experienced headaches after his released and was subsequently taken to the hospital. The Chief Justice of the province, Omran Ali-Mohammadi, said that Soleimankhani committed suicide by taking an overdose of pills.
	Date of death	18, May, 2023	
	Name	Bamshad Sulimankhani	
	Sex	M	
	Age	21	
5	Province, City	Gilan, Rasht	Mazdak Maryaneh Hamedani, arrested in November 2022, died under suspicious circumstances shortly after his release.
	Date of death	23, March, 2023	
	Name	Mazdak Maryaneh Hmedani	
	Sex	M	
	Age	16	
6	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Arash Forouzandeh Jamali, arrested on 10, March 2023, was released after a few hours of interrogation during which, according to various accounts, he was given water to drink. He fell ill shortly afterwards and tragically died around ten days later.
	Date of death	19, March, 2023	
	Name	Arash Forouzandeh Jamali	
	Sex	M	
	Age	33	

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7	Province, City	Kerman, Kerman	Maryam Arvin, a lawyer, was arrested on 20, November 2022. She was released on bail on 12, December 2022. However, two months later, on 08, February 2023, she died under suspicious circumstances. The public prosecutor of Sirjan, in southern Iran, has announced that Arvin “committed suicide by using medical products”. ¹³
	Date of death	08, February, 2023	
	Name	Maryam Arvin	
	Sex	F	
	Age	19	
8	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Mohabbat Mozafari, a lawyer, was arrested in late November 2022. She tragically passed away in February 2022. A few days after her release, she experienced sudden bleeding from the nose while sleeping, ultimately leading to her death.
	Date of death	02, February, 2022	
	Name	Mohabbat Mozafari	
	Sex	F	
	Age	34	
9	Province, City	Gilan, Roudsar	Mohsen Jafari, a filmmaker and film critic, was arrested on 05, November, 2022. He was released after ten days. His subsequent death was announced as suicide.
	Date of death	08, January, 2023	
	Name	Mohsen Jafari	
	Sex	M	
	Age	36	

¹³ Report by Islamic regime in Persian: [The details of one lawyer's suicide in Sirjan, Public Prosecutor: She had attempted to use drugs last year too.](#)

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10	Province, City	Kurdistan, Kamyaran	<p>Pooya Ghisvandi was arrested in September 2022 and temporarily released on bail a few days later. According to his family, on the night of his release, Pooya appeared mentally disturbed. The following day, his lifeless body was discovered in his home. He was described as a happy and hopeful young man by his family. His funeral witnessed a significant presence of IRGC security forces. During the morgue process, security forces restricted the family from taking photos or viewing the body and confiscated all personal belongings. Pooya's mother sought information from the forensic doctor, but she was discouraged from pursuing the case. The family faced intense pressure not to publicize the events, as there were threats of further arrests within the family. The circumstances of Pooya's experiences in prison remain unknown.</p>
	Date of death	September, 2022	
	Name	Pooya Ghisvandi	
	Sex	M	
	Age	27	
11	Province, City	Tehran, Shahriar	<p>Alireza Fili was beaten, and his mobile phone was confiscated because he had torn up a picture of the Supreme Leader, Khamenei. A few days after the attack, Alireza was abducted and killed. His death was portrayed as suicide. Alireza's body was found in his father's shop hanged, with a rope around his neck. His shirt and trouser pockets were torn.¹⁴</p>
	Date of death	21, October, 2022	
	Name	Alireza Fili	
	Sex	M	
	Age	17	
12	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	<p>Yalda Aghafazli was arrested on 26, October 2022, and released ten days later. Tragically, she passed away a few days after her release. The regime declared that Yalda died of an overdose.</p>
	Date of death	November, 2022	
	Name	Yalda Aghafazli	
	Sex	F	
	Age	19	

¹⁴ <https://cfppi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Report-CFPPI-Eng-IranChildren-052023-1.pdf> P. 31

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13	Province, City	Fars, Shiraz	Iliad Rahmanipour was found dead three days after his abduction in November 2022. The regime claimed that Iliad committed suicide. ¹⁵
	Date of death	November, 2022	
	Name	Iliad Rahmanipour	
	Sex	M	
	Age	17	
14	Province, City	Azerbaijan, Jolfa	Arshia Imamgholizadeh's death was officially decaled as a suicide. However, prior to his passing, had had informed his family that he was forced to take pills while in prison. ¹⁶
	Date of death	November, 2022	
	Name	Arshia Imamgholizadeh	
	Sex	M	
	Age	16	
15	Province, City	Khuzestan, Shush	Abbas Mansouri was arrested during the 2022 protests and detained in prison for 20 days. Upon his release he confided in his family, revealing that two days before being set free, he had been administered unknown tables and injected with unidentified drugs while in prison. His tragic death after his release was officially reported as suicide.
	Date of death	2022	
	Name	Abbas Mansouri	
	Sex	M	
	Age	19	

¹⁵ <https://cfppi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Report-CFPPI-Eng-IranChildren-052023-1.pdf> P. 29

¹⁶ <https://cfppi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Report-CFPPI-Eng-IranChildren-052023-1.pdf> P. 30

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16	Province, City	Tehran, Tehran	Behnam Mahjoubi, a member of Iran's persecuted Gonabdi Dervish religious minority was arrested in June 2020. Mahjoubi's wife published a letter in August 2020 saying that her husband was forcibly administered multiple tranquilizers. He was admitted to Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital against his will, where he was injected with unidentified drugs before being transferred to Loghman-e Hakim Hospital. Tragically, he passed away on 16, February, 2021.
	Date of death	16, February, 2021	
	Name	Behman Mahjoubi	
	Sex	M	
	Age	36	

Appendix A.

An account of pharmacological torture in Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital: Saman Yasin's audio message

The following is a translation of an audio message¹⁷ from Saman Yasin, 25 years old jailed rapper from Rajai Shahr Prison. The audio message is translated from Persian to English by CFPPI. Saman describes his experiences of pharmacological torture in Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital.

I am Saman Yasin, a 25-year-old Kurdish rapper from Rajai Shahr Prison.

It seems they want to transfer me to Ghezel Hesar [prison]!

The high psychological pressure has made the tolerance of imprisonment impossible for me. I have gone to the infirmary many times and requested them to do something because my mind can't take it anymore! They agreed to do tests and follow up on my intolerance. Because they know what troubles they have inflicted upon me in these ten months with undisclosed drugs, injections, and mental and physical torture. Early Sunday morning, they told me to get ready to go to Razi Hospital (Aminabad) for testing. Little did I know what new kinds of torture awaited me there! I wore my clothes and went. Several boys and girls began shouting and causing a scene as soon as they saw me at the entrance of that facility, asking, 'Where are you taking Saman Yasin?' The authorities dispersed them and told them not to make a fuss. They took me inside from a back door at the rear of the building. I didn't know what plan they had arranged for me; I believed it was a transfer for examination and a temporary leave. I shouldn't have believed it.

An hour passed, and then they took me to a section called 'Sina One,' I think that was its name. They said, 'We need to give you an injection.' I refused and started resisting, shouting, and resisting. I think there were about 8 different people who attacked me, beating and swearing at me, accusing me of something I hadn't done, saying it was all my fault. I hit an empty glass that didn't break; it was tough. A soldier held my hands down, and I leapt, hitting him with the glass, and the glass broke. I didn't want them to inject me with that cursed drug and kill me.

They hit my head from behind by an electric shocker. Several people tied me to a bed. My whole body is still sore, and my eyes are blurry with double vision. They injected me while I was being beaten and abused. Many people poured over me! I don't know how many days later I regained consciousness, maybe 24 hours or perhaps two days.

I found myself locked to the bed. Dizzy, everything was dark and blurry, and I still had double vision everywhere, and I was dizzy. They hit my head a lot. I was a healthy person! I'm not suicidal or anything, why would I harm myself? They

¹⁷ <https://youtu.be/mm7GatElb-k?si=z3vIDZ9Ge4g96MVh>

forced me, over these ten months, to confess and pressured me to take drugs and injected me! The last time they claimed in the news that Saman Yasin had attempted suicide, I hadn't done it!

They forcibly fed me four pills in prison that time. When I regained consciousness, I was inside the infirmary, and I really don't know what had happened and how long it took me to come to my senses.

Now they regularly bring mysterious undisclosed pills, but I refuse to take them no matter what. My whole body is wounded after being transferred from Aminabad to prison. They wanted to strip and take a group shower; I didn't go. I resisted so much that they had to return me to Rajai Shahr Prison on Tuesday night.

I urgently need to be hospitalized outside the prison in a specialized facility. My balance is not returning, everything is dark, and I have dizziness. Since last Saturday, they have been bringing this disaster upon me. It's now Friday, and I haven't improved. Then when I sleep I see dreams of execution or torture. I keep having nightmares.

I went to the infirmary; they said it's because of the medication, you'll get better. But I didn't get better! It's been almost a week, and I'm not getting better! They should take me to a forensic doctor. What disaster have they brought upon me?

Whatever happens to me, I declare that I didn't have any health problems prior to these ten months; I've been taken away without any health problems. The responsibility for my life lies with Judge Salavati and other officials!

Now, apparently, they've assigned a court date for the 18th of Shahrivar [9, September 2023]. Without a lawyer? I was a healthy and busy person. Rap is the voice of the people and the sound of injustice.

I, myself, was a child labourer, the voice of injustice for Kurdish children and the poverty of Baluch people. I am thirsty like Karun¹⁸ and the drying of Lake Urmia¹⁹. That's why I'm a rapper.

Why have they targeted me? Is my crime singing?

Saman Yasin (Saman Sayedi)

Friday, July 2, 2023

Rajai Shahr Prison

¹⁸ Referring to the river, Karun: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karun>

¹⁹ Referring to the lake, Urmia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Urmia

Appendix B.

An account of pharmacological and physical torture from Evin Prison: Vida Rabbani's Letter

Vida (Vahideh) Rabbani is a 34-year-old journalist from Tehran, a member of the Tehran Journalists Association, and human rights activist. Vida was arrested on 24, September 2022, and was sentenced to seven years in prison on 31, December 2022. Vida's letter, which was initially published on social media on 25, May 2023, sheds light on the extreme hardships she faces. She is currently serving her sentence in Evin Prison. The following excerpt is part of her letter²⁰, translated from Persian into English by CFPPI.

I have witnessed your interest in having detainees and prisoners use nerve medications. When I said I was fine in Evin Prison and no longer needed medication, you still called every night for someone to come and bring me medicine. Was this for the purpose of later claiming in your media that the person has a history of neurological and psychological illness? Is this why you orchestrate cases, so that in your prisons, even when you cut off water, painkillers and sedatives are always available?

I heard that in Qarchak Prison²¹, they were telling detainees of the Mahsa Uprising that they could provide them with housing and tranquilizers as much as they wanted. Substances like Chlordiazepoxide, Clonazepam, Tranqopin [Quetiapine], etc., were distributed like candy. At first, I couldn't believe that they would give whatever you requested. They referred to nerve medications as the "Wheel of Happiness." One night, I became concerned about some girls' well-being. I tried it myself; I asked a Qarchak Prison nurse to give me two Clonazepam, and they handed me the pill on the spot. I handed it back, expressing my protest about the situation.

Ward 8 in Qarchak Prison housed detained women under the age of 30. Some had detained young girls in horrific conditions, mostly involving beating, insult, and humiliation. Coerced confessions and forced repentance had become prevalent, and this group, filled with trauma, anxiety, and fear, was spiralling without officials even considering what they were going through psychologically. The reality that in Qarchak Prison, they were treating brain swelling and brain cysts causing bleeding by stuffing cotton in the nose, as testified by Niloufar Fathi, shows the dire situation these girls were facing and the potential for tragedies, including self-harm and suicide.

I will never forget the beautiful face of Yalda Aghafazli²², and her fate. And the subsequent suicides of other detainees from Ward 8. They remain unforgettable. If

²⁰ Vida Rabbani's letter: [in Persian](#)

²¹ [Qarchak Prison - Wikipedia](#)

²² See Table 4, case 12, for an account of Yalda's death.

Yalda hadn't been detained, she would be alive today. But does it matter to you? Nothing matters to you except the destroying the lives of these people, which are expendable to you. From security institutions and the judiciary, we cannot expect much, but I wish that at least psychological and psychiatric associations would protest these atrocities by challenging their professional protocols. If the case of a patient is to be turned into a tool by security agencies, what security will remain in the treatment room, which is supposed to be a place where the patient can freely express themselves? If patient files are to become playthings in the hands of security institutions, what security is there in the treatment room, which is supposed to be a place where the patient can freely express themselves?

People like me and many others are victims of the security and judicial institutions. But I wish you would consider creating psychiatric files for those who are dangerous and harmful. For example, that officer who, after my objection to his disrespectful language, punched me in the face and said one of his relatives had been killed in recent events and he is angry. Has he visited a psychiatrist? Is he taking tranquilizers, or is his anger still ongoing, and why is he subjecting detainees to violence? That female officer from Detention Centre 209 who was wrapping a piece of cloth around my arms and dragging me on the ground, yelling to break my hands and legs and tossing me into the cell - the one who had told detained girls that she wished she could beat each of them down with the four legs of a chair - is she still on duty, or have you given her the medical leave she deserves?

What about that interrogator-doctor of yours who, after my hunger strike when I had lost 9 kilos in a week and my blood sugar had reached 50, claimed I was doing well and lying about my hunger strike? Is he still visiting Detention Centre 209, claiming the prisoners are lying, and in his opinion, everyone is faking illness? Believe me, these are signs of your doctor's mental disorder. When your staff are like that, and they, like many psychotic patients, have no understanding that they are dangerous, their behaviour is only natural. People like me, who have crossed paths with these individuals, may now take anxiety and depression medication, but at least we pose no danger to others. I wish you would be a little concerned about your own employees who need urgent psychiatric treatments.”

About Campaign to Free Political Prisoners in Iran (CFPPI)

In 2006, a group of ex-political prisoners from Iran set up Campaign to Free Political Prisoners in Iran (CFPPI), a non-government, non-profit organization, to become the voice of political prisoners and their families in Iran. Since then we have grown internationally in most European countries, Canada the USA and some of the Middle East countries including Iran. We have actively brought attention to not only the political prisoners held in Iran but also to the crimes against humanity committed by the present regime in Iran.

We believe that everyone should have the right to choose the way they want to live their lives without fear of punishment by their government, regardless of their gender, religion, belief, political views or sexual orientation.

Our mission is to put an end to the systematic attack on the fundamental rights of the people in Iran who are living under constant fear of arrest and torture. We also aim to raise awareness of the brutal nature of the regime through which we hope the international community will help us apply enough pressure to secure the release of all political prisoners.

Campaign to Free Political Prisoners is a non-profit registered in Canada.
Registration Number: 1505988-7

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